

A  
**SERMON**

Preach'd at the  
**Anniversary Meeting**  
OF THE  
**Warwick-shire Men.**

AT THE  
Church of St. *LAURENCE*,  
*Novemb. 25. 1680.*

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By **ROBERT TAYLER** Rector  
of *Hadly* in *Middlesex.*

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**L O N D O N,**

Printed for *T. Basset*, at the George near *S. Dun-*  
*stan's Church* in *Fleet-street.* 1680.

TAYLER  
(Robert)

# SERMON

Preached at the

Anniversary Meeting

OF THE

Warwickshire Mission

AT THE

Church of St. Lawrence

Warwick, 1880.

By ROBERT TAYLER, Rector  
of Huddersfield.

LONDON:

Printed for the Warwickshire Mission, by  
Messrs. G. & J. Smith, 15, Abchurch Lane, E.C. 4.

To my Honour &

Friends and Country men,

Mr. { John Walden,  
Capt. Rich. Halford,  
Thomas Hartley,  
William Stockton,

Mr. { John Worley,  
John Carles,  
George Hopkins,  
Abraham Abney,

Stewards of the last Warrickshire Feast

Gentlemen,

I Never thought to have appeared in publick upon any account whatsoever much less in such a crude and undigested discourse as this, which was only the hasty thoughts of a very few hours; and had I consulted my own credit as much as I did your desires, it is certain I had never yielded to them in this matter: but since you have overruled me thus to expose my self, I hope you will please to stand by me herein, and to defend and protect this Sermon, now that it is come



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The Epistle Dedicatory.

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abroad at your requests, as a creature of  
your own, and to take this performance,  
as indeed it is, for one of the greatest ar-  
guments I can possibly give you, of my  
being,

Gentlemen,

Your most affectionate Country-  
man and real servant

Robert Tayer.



1 John 4. 21.

*This Commandment have we from him,  
that he who loveth God, love his Bro-  
ther also.*

**O**F all things Religion is the great interest  
of Bodies and combinations of Men,  
which way soever we turn our Eyes we  
behold the happiness of these depending  
thereon; it being to every Society as the Sun is to  
the World, the blessing and the glory of it, and that  
which sends healthful and benign influences from  
one end thereof to the other.

If we look up above us, its this is the ornament  
and lustre of those that sit there, and our great se-  
curity concerning the trust reposed in them that  
they will not abuse it: If we look down be-  
neath us its this enlarges our Hearts, and melts our  
Bowels, and opens wide our Hands, to our poor  
Brother, and we become Fathers to the fatherless,  
Patrons to the afflicted, and fill the Souls of the  
miserable and needy with joy and gladness. If we  
look upon the great bulk of Men betwixt these  
two; without Religion every Man is a Devil to  
another, his Hand at his Brothers throat and his  
Heart steel'd with cruelty; the language of Men is  
but so much deceit and falshood, and we watch

one another for opportunities to devour and destroy one another; and with Religion *homo homini deus*, one man becomes a god to another, men are full of mutual goodness and beneficence, obliging and doing good to all mankind. Of all matters Religion is the most contrary thing in the World to penurious and covetous and miserable dispositions, it works out of us ill nature, and moroseness, and unhandfom, and ungenerous principles; it files off that rugged, and churlish, and Pharisaical temper; which makes men Diseases and Plagues one to another; and in the place of these things, plants in us sweet and gracious frames of mind, improves and betters humane nature; moulding it into humble and affable, courteous and charitable dispositions, dilating and opening our Hearts to our Brethren, and raising us up from all sordid and pitiful meanness and degeneracy of Soul, to a heavenly and godlike Mind; delighting in doing good, prompt and ready to all offices of kindness and humanity, and readily taking every opportunity of Mercy and Compassion.

There are certain qualifications in our converse with other men, are like so many charms upon their loves and affections; these things Religion has adopted into her precepts, and made our duty; we are enjoyned ingenuity and candour, integrity and faithfulness, *To do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly; Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, Religion is practising these matters.*

This

This influences upon us in all relations and circumstances whatsoever to good purpose; first, unites us in love, makes us live together like Brethren, and then in the strictest bond of that union: This makes us sincere and hearty Friends, charitable and beneficial Neighbours, good Parents and good Children, good Masters and good Servants, and persons filling up our places, and answering our offices, be it in what rank it will we stand.

For such is the nature and contrivance of Religion, it is tender as of godliness, so also of charity and justice like wise; God does not require from us a bare devotion, only some formalities of worship to be performed to him, and then put us into our own Hands to do what we will to Men. Let us loose to be Beasts of prey one towards another, having secured our Homages and Fealties to him, leave all things else arbitrary and indifferent. But the Divine Laws, tie up our Hands from wrong and oppression, as they do from Sacrilege and Idolatry; fence and enclose us in our rights, as the God in that honour is due unto him; command Charity and Love and Humanity from man to man, as they do Prayers and Thanksgivings from man to God. And God has given mankind this great argument of his regard and concerns for it, he has enacted the like Laws, for our comfortable living together and enjoying one another, as he has done for his own worship; made Religion consist as well in acts of Love and Mercy among our selves, as in acts of Devotion to him: and so order'd matters that it is impossible to be a good Christian without being a cha-



ritable man, that the Love of God is but one half of our duty, and the Love of man makes up the other part. For so the Apostle tells us, *This Commandment have we from him; that he who loveth God love his Brother also.*

The occasion of which words were the Gnosticks, a sort of infamous Hereticks, even in the Apostles days, who grossly adulterated the Christian Religion with false and spurious Doctrines and Glosses of their own; now among other particulars they were very guilty in these two.

1. They made Religion a speculative thing, to consist in curious notions and high-flown distinctions; puzzled their Brains about deep mysteries, and stuffed their heads with strange subtilties of dispute; and called this Christianity and the way to Heaven. This the Apostle speaks against in the second Chapter, asserting true Religion is a great deal more than a few dry and empty Maxims, than a set of lean and sapless reasonings and arguments, that leave us the same men they find us; nothing is true knowledge of God, but that is a principle of good life and pious actions in us, but that makes us bring forth the fruit of holiness; v. 3. 4. *Hereby (says he) we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

2ly. The Gnosticks laid the great stress of Religion in acts of devotion and worship, and look'd on Charity and Truth and Honesty as low and mean things in comparison of those matters; did some par-

particulars relating to God, but then were mighty criminal in respect of men, injurious and unmerciful and cruel to their Brethren, uncharitable and unworthy and unrighteous to their neighbours, in the midst of all their glorious shews and glittering pretences of Religion. This the Apostle speaks against in several places of this Epistle, declaring Religion is made up of the Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour too; he that pretends to a right worshipping of God and is defective towards Man, is a rank hypocrite and a deceiver; for he neither knews nor loves God as he ought to do, is wanting in his duty towards man; Chap. 3. v. 10. *In this (says he) the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil: whosoever does not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.* And again, Chap. 4. v. 20. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a liar: For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* As if the Apostle had said, whatsoever pretences men make to pure and true Religion, if they are not Charitable, and honest, and just, as well as pious, and godly, and devout, all is but a meer image and picture of Religion; and flattering and fawning upon that God whom they do not really love. All is but shew and appearance, for the commandment is as clear, the injunction is as expresse and positive concerning the one as the other. *This Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God loveth his Brother also.*

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Which Text offers to our considerations these two things.

First, That there is an absolute and indispensable necessity of *Morality* in Religion, of performing our duties to Man as well as those to God. This is the sense of this Scripture in its full latitude and extent, and in the language of this Apostle in this Epistle calls our whole duty to God loving him, and loving our Brother our whole duty to him.

Secondly, That particularly Charity, and Kindness, and Beneficence, and doing all offices of Humanity, and Love one to another; are most essential parts of Christianity, without which it is impossible for us to be really, and as we ought to be, Religious. This is the letter and expression of the Text.

Which two things are the proper business of this present assembly; we thus Annually meet together to maintain and keep up Christian Love and Charity among our Countrymen, *To consider and provoke one another to Love and to good works*; for the preserving alive and increasing our friendship and mutual correspondence; and in consideration our Brother has a part in us, and that we were not born only for our selves, but for our neighbours also.

And now that being here, I may do some assistances to these noble and generous designs, I shall make it my business, for this present entertainment, to lay before you the truth of the propositions of the Text.

First, Intreating the favourable construction and indulgence of this Honourable Society, for my weak



weak performances herein, having after much unwillingness, and with great fears, undertaken to approach this place at two or three days warning; the worthy person designed for this imployment; not being able to perform his promise by reason of sickness.

Now the first thing I am to consider is, that there is an absolute necessity of Morality in Religion, of performing our duties to man as well as those to God. And this is a matter is notoriously evident, for not to be idolaters, but to be unjust; not to take Gods Name in vain, but to be unrighteous and unmerciful; not to be without the Faith of a Deity, but to be guilty of *bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking*; not to be Sacrilegious, but to be deceitful and treacherous, and commit acts of dishonesty and baseness, a Heathen wou'd abhor; what a strange imperfect Religion is this? To what purpose is their Religion, who cover Gods Altar at once with Hecatombs and with tears; with the tears and cryings of such as are oppressed, who are at once mighty zealous and mighty uncharitable too; great Saints and great Knaves also? This was the Religion of the Pharisees, our Saviour so oft denounces woe against and proclaims hypocrites; *They made long prayers*, were indefatigable at their devotions, and of admir'd humiliation and fasting before the world; and by the help of this pretended sanctity couzened and cheated the poor and needy; *devour'd widows houses*, and got their possessions. They went duly to Gods house, they served him constantly with sacrifices and oblations; and

and thus having as they thought, secur'd God, made little conscience of their duties to their neighbours.

In the Prophet *Micah* this question about Religion is stated, how God is to be worshipped and served; and it is declar'd he will not be brib'd by thousands of oblations; the most costly devotions without Justice and Mercy are nothing worth. *Mic. 6. 6. Wherewith (says the Prophet) shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? To this it's answered, He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? We are first to be good and charitable men, before God will accept of any thing from us, even of our very Prayers and Offerings: If we bring a gift or oblation before the Altar, and there remember that our brother hath ought against us, we must leave our gift, and go our way; we must first be reconciled to our brother, and then, and not tell then, will God accept of our gift. When the Jews fasted with blood in their hands, and injustice in their actions, and malice in their hearts, God threw back those devotions in the greatest disdain; and told them his Religion that he call'd for, was a charitable thing, and made up of goodness and beneficence. *Isa. 58. v. 6. & 7. Is not this the fast that I have chosen,* ( says*

( says God ) to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke ? is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own flesh ?

There is no such thing as an unmerciful Christian, as a religious Covetous man, as an holy Miser, as a godly Oppressor, these are expressions imply a contradiction, it is impossible to be Religious at an easier rate than doing Good. *Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World.* To live, as if the observing the first Table, would make amends for the breaking of the Second ; as if God had said, *I will have sacrifice and not mercy* ; is it not to live in open defiance to his Laws, and at best to offer God, the maimed, the halt, and the blind ?

Justice, and Charity, and Truth, have in all Ages been accounted our duty ; of the essentials and vitals of Religion. The very Heathens saw inviolable obligations upon men, to the performance of these things, that it was impossible without these to be truly religious ; and the Gospel is so far from disannulling this Notion of Religion, which was before amongst men, that it is the strictest Doctrine to these purposes, that ever was in the world : no Religion so punctually requires, so positively commands the highest measures of Righteousness and Justice, and Charity betwixt man and man ; so dreadfully



threatens the neglect of these virtues, as the Christian doth. It is every where pathetically recommending, vehemently pressing and inculcating these matters upon us, insomuch, that if preaching up Righteousness, and Justice, and Charity, be Moral Preaching, our Saviour and his Apostles, were the most Moral Preachers that ever were in the World. This is the first thing in the Text, There is a necessity of Morality in Religion.

2. Secondly, particularly Charity, and Kindness, and Beneficence, and doing all Offices of love and humanity one to another, are most essential parts of Christianity; without which it is impossible for us to be really, and as we ought to be Religious. There are many pretences of Zeal and Godliness among us, and we say, *Lo here is Christ*, in this and that Sect; and *Lo, there is Christ*, in the other darling Notion and Scheme of Religion; but our Saviour assured us, when all is done, one of the the best arguments to prove our selves his Disciples by, is loving one another; an extraordinary Charity, and love among Christians, is their great badge and cognizance they ought to be known by from all other men. *A new Commandment (says he) I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples if ye love one another. John 13: 34, 35.* We are of a Religion, wherein Charity is the life of our Faith, the argument we have any such thing; wherein an airy invisible Faith no body is the better for, dwell only in the Head, and has no influence at all upon our

our actions to the purpose of Charity; is declared a dead useless thing, will never stand us in any stead. We are of a Religion admits no such thing as an enemy, offers all mankind to our embraces and affections; and wherein Malice, and Envy, and Hatred are things of such a cursed and malignant nature, they infect and poyson us, our most solemn acts of devotion; turning even the Blessed Sacrament into our damnation.

There are indeed some Religions in the World, an uncharitable man may do pretty well in, live in a tolerable conformity to, and yet have his uncharitable crime, be envious and malicious, be cruel and unmerciful: But *Christianity* is a doctrine of perfect love, a discipline of universal Charity, and a Religion wherein to be uncharitable, is the same thing with being no true Christians.

This is to live in an open and opprobrious violation of the great Laws and Sanctions of the Gospel; makes this one of its principal designs, to joyn us together in Love and Peace and Amity; and to promote and advance Charity and good works in the World. These are the precepts it gives us; *To do good, and to distribute not to forget, because with such Sacrifices God is well pleased. To be merciful as our Father which is in Heaven is merciful; because he shall have judgment without mercy, who shews no mercy. Above all things to have fervent Charity among our selves. To be Rich in good works, to be ready to distribute, and willing to Communicate. To love one another, because God is love, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. To love our Neighbours as*

*our selves.* These are the great Rules of our Religion we are to walk by ; and it is a huge mistake to look upon Charity, and acts of Love and Mercy, as by-works, as indifferent matters ; we ought to make them our great business, to lay out our selves about doing good as our proper and mighty employment in this world, to snatch at opportunities of Alms, as at blessed occasions of doing good to our own Souls, and being charitable to our selves. We indeed call them little things, look upon them as matters of choice left to us, whether we will perform them or not ; but God and Scripture reckon at another rate, speak of these particulars as the great and weighty duties of Religion, as things we are never like to go to heaven without, and which we ought to be tender concerning, as our souls and salvations are dear to us.

Thus I have done with the propositions of the Text, I now come to draw some inferences from this discourse by way of Application.

1. I have all this while been recommending to you Charity and good works, shewing the great necessity there is of these in the Christian Religion ; And now I cannot forbear, upon the score of this discourse, in the first place, to take notice, how unworthily we of the Reformation are abused by the Church of *Rome* in this matter ; we are traduced as persons believe we may be saved well enough without good works, as those think there is no necessity of these things, but that a bare faith is sufficient ; I call Heaven and earth to witness this day, we are unjustly charged in this business, both Priests and



and People; For us of the Clergy, do not we press good works upon you? you are taught, you are exhorted, you are beseeched to abound in goodness and Charity as the great evidence of your Faith. We do not indeed tell you, you may merit heaven by your Works, We do not Preach to you the Doctrine of Supererrogation, for we dare not lie to your Souls; but as you all know, we do as the Scriptures do, we call upon you to remember the *afflictions of Joseph*: we urge you again and again to *put on as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness, of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another even as Christ forgave you.* We press Charity and good works upon you by line upon line, and precept upon precept; *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven; who doth good to all and whose mercies are over all his works.*

And as for you of the Laity, that you do not believe there is no necessity of these things, I have invincible arguments here before me, this present Congregation and Assembly, these many Children set out by the Charity of this particular Feast: These our Shire meetings have of late so much obtained amongst us, are so many evidences of this. Your actions shew that we neither Preach that strange Doctrine is laid to our charge, nor you believe it that Charity and good works are not quite extinguished and dead among us since the Reformation; that there is still a vigorous sense in us, of our obligations to these things. God be thanked, we can shew abundant monuments of our Charity, we can  
prove

prove in in the eyes of all men, it is not a thing we have laid aside, and left, when we left the Innovations and Idolatries of the Church of Rome. The Learned Bishop *Andrews* in his time made observations concerning this very matter, how Charity thrived in *England* after the Reformation; and he declares he was able to make out, there was as much of this, as many Alms & Contributions made to pious works, within that forty years he took notice of, under the Reformation, as ever were within any forty years, during all the time of Popery. We are not indeed as charitable as we should be, we are entreated to be more; but still as we are, our enemies may be ashamed to throw dirt upon our Religion, and charge it with uncharitableness.

2. Secondly. From what has been said, it appears the Christian Religion is also infamously abused by that Church; it is as we see the greatest bond of Union and Charity and Love, a meek and a gentle Religion, but to the eternal scandal of those of that Communion, it is made use of by them as if it were the most cruel & bloody Religion, that ever was in the World. Instead of rooting out of them malice and hatred, rancour, and bloody principles and bloody designs, this innocent, this galleſs, this charitable Religion is made to foment all these things it came to destroy. There are not more damnable acts than have been done by those of that Church, and all under a pretence of Religion; Kingdoms have been turned into rivers of Blood, Kings thrust out of their possessions, brought from their Thrones to the block, and all under a colour of Zeal and Godliness; treasours

treasons and conspiracies, black and diabolical beyond the examples of all former ages, have been hatch'd; Subjects have been absolved from the Oaths of Allegiance, Swords put into the hands of Traitors and Incendiaries, & Rebels armed against their lawful Princes, & the most barbarous slaughters and butcheries committed; and God & Religion have still bore the blame of all, all has been set upon their score, and all pretended to be done for their sakes. Thus infamously hath Christianity been abused by that People; the most Charitable Religion in the World, made the promoter of all manner of violence and bloodshed, and uncharitableness.

I have not time now to run over all the monstrous guilt and abominations of these practises; but thus much I may and must say, if this be practicable, if men may do these things for the sake of Religion, to what purpose did our Saviour come, to what end did he speak, or what is the World the better for Religion? For as one of the *Mediterranean* Pyrats told *Cesar*; *Sir, If you kill the little Pyrats and set up for a great one your self, what is the world the better?* So if Religion come armed against all vices, and beat them out, and yet may bring them in at the back door to serve her own turn, what is the World amended? to what purpose is it, that according to the Principles of Christianity, we renounce the World, the Flesh and the Devil; if yet we may plow with all these to bring in an harvest to the Church? to what purpose, are all the strict Laws of Justice and Meekness and Obedience to Government, *and doing to other men as we would they should do*.



*do unto us*, if we may break these as oft as we will, under pretence of Religion? and there are cases wherein we may with good consciences violate them all, and do any thing notwithstanding all the threats of the Gospel to the contrary?

3. Thirdly. From the considerations of the Text, let us all in general be perswaded to a most firm love and Charity one towards another; we profess a great honour and esteem for our Religion, a huge veneration and regard for our Lord and Saviour, and we cannot better express this, than by a mutual love and concord among our selves; this was his great commandment to his Disciples at his going out of the World, and the Legacy he left us. The mutual hatred and animosities of Christians bring a scandal upon our Religion, and make our Saviour reproached in the World; Turks and Infidels belch out blasphemies against the Son of God, for our sakes, Thus dishonouring our profession: Our Religion is charged with our crimes, and Christianity is thought to be guilty because we are found to be so. These things ought to sink deep into our minds, and make us zealous to retrieve the honour of our Religion, and the glory of Christianity, by hasting to joyn together in love, and live as brethren in unity and peace. This is the third Inference.

And now Gentlemen and Countrey-men, it is time that I address my self particularly to you, and the occasion of this present assembly: We are here met together again this Year, to go on with the Feast of

of Love and Charity amongst those of our own Countrey, a Feast has now been kept up for a great many years amongst us, is so ancient that if it be not the oldest, is one of those are of the longest standing of this kind in this City; is so ancient, and God has been pleased so to bless the Charities herein given, that several of these poor Children that have been set out by the Contributions of this Feast, have come to be chosen Stewards hereof themselves; God has so prospered and encreased them in the World; A Feast has been kept to those good purposes, there are many alive now blest the day, there ever was such a Society; a Feast of such Charity it is an Annual blessing and happiness to our Native Countrey, constantly setting out of it Eight poor children to Apprentice every year.

And now let us in the name of God, go on in this work of Charity and Love, and abound yet more and more; there are a great many praises, and commendations belonging to our Countrey, this is not the least of them, that so many Honorable and Noble Persons, so many Worthy and Eminent men, out of this Countrey meet together every year on purposes of Love and Charity; and make it appear to the world, God hath not only given them Estates; but he has given them more than all these, that is, he has given them hearts to do good, and to communicate.

Let us then proceed cheerfully herein, this is to be Christians indeed, the Copy that we pretend to write after; the example our Religion propounds to our imitation, is an example of Charity and

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goodness: This was the employment of the Blessed Jesus whilst he was here on Earth, where do we find him but either instructing the ignorant, or feeding the hungry, or teaching his Disciples the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven? all his life was but one continued act of doing good, and dealing large doles of mercy to needy mankind.

We all hope to spend an eternity with Angels and Saints in Heaven, and the way to put our Souls in a posture for those joys there, is by enuring them to Charity and Love; Heaven is a place of Peace and Love; Charity sits sweetly upon every brow there, and all actions are performed according to its measures, they communicate in Love, and their actions are Charity, and the hoarse and noysom voice of Envy and Contention, is never heard in that serene region.

You see all your performances in Religion without Charity are to no purpose, let this stir up your hearts to this excellent grace; the Primitive Church had such Feasts as these, Love-Feasts, wherein they rejoyced before God for his blessings, and were exemplarily Charitable to those in want, let us make this truly a Feast of Charity, *Open wide our hands now*, and give liberally. God has blessed us with the things of this life, let it never be said of any of us, as it was of the Emperour *Pertinax*, concerning whom it was reported, that he had *Augustum Imperium, Angustum Animum*, a large and a spacious Empire, but a narrow and a scanty Heart: Instead of this let us that have great Estates, be ashamed to have little and mean Souls; instead of this let



remember, nothing makes us so like to God as Bounty and Beneficence, and be ambitious of imitating the Divine perfections: instead of this, let us give plenteously, considering that as it is the securest way of laying up our Riches *to lend them to the Lord*, so it is indeed the best husbandry and likeliest way for us to thrive in the World, for so we are assured, *That the liberal Soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall himself also be watered.*

I have now done, and have only this Prayer to add further, that God of his mercy and goodness would be pleased to give every one of us grace so to take all opportunities of doing good and distributing; that all we, who are here met together this day on purposes of Love and Charity, may meet together hereafter in Heaven, to rejoyce to all eternity with God the Father Son and Holy Ghost, to whom be Glory both now and for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.

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 way to think that we are able to do more for  
 God, than the liberal Jew has been able to do, and that  
 we shall thereby be more like him.

**Advertisement.**

**A** Sermon Preached at the War-  
 ick-shire Meeting, November  
 25. 1679. At St. Mary-le-Bon in  
 Cheap-side, London. By William Basset,  
 Rector of Bonlow in Warwick-shire.  
 Sold by T. Basset, at the George near  
 St Dunstons Church in Fleet-street.